

## Message Text

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ACTION AGRE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00  
OMB-01 AID-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 /047 W  
-----088775 180636Z /11

R 180500Z FEB 78  
FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7270  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 NICOSIA 0450

DEPT PASS USDA/OGSM  
DAMASCUS FOR AGATT  
AMMAN FOR HYSLOP  
TEL AVIV FOR AGATT

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: EAGR, BEXP, SY, JD, IS,  
SUBJECT: POPE VISIT SYRIA, JORDAN, ISRAEL,

1. SYRIA. 2/8-9. MR. HADDAD OF TAFCO SENDS REGARDS TO WALLACE  
AND STAFF.

A. RICE: TAFCO FEELS US RICE PRICES TOO HIGH AND IS  
SURVEYING OTHER MARKETS (EGYPT, PRC) TO COVER IMPORT NEEDS.  
IN ORDER TO LOWER COST US RICE, TAFCO WOULD CONSIDER PURCHASE  
OF US NO. 3 WITH 10 PERCENT BROKENS. PROBABLE DELIVERY MAY/  
JUNE. TAFCO PLEASED WITH NEW CONTRACTS PROCEDURES WHICH ALLOW  
LOWEST LANDED COST PURCHASE.

B. VEG OIL: MOST TITLE I VEG OIL FROM 1977 PROGRAM STILL  
IN STORAGE AS GOVT IMPORT DUTY MAKES PRICE UNCOMPETITIVE.  
WE POINTED OUT THAT SUCH DUTY WAS IN EFFECT A GOS TAX  
ON ITSELF. AGATT WILL FOLLOW UP. ACTION REQUESTED: THIS  
VEG OIL WAS LOADED US PORTS AROUND SEPT 1977, PLEASE PROVIDE  
AGATT INFO ON POSSIBLE DETERIORATION CAUSED BY PROLONGED  
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STORAGE.

C. TOBACCO: US TOBACCO STILL IN INVENTORY AWAITING  
START UP OF TOBACCO FACTORY, NOW ESTIMATED FOR AUGUST 1978.  
PLANT WILL HAVE BEGINNING PRODUCTION OF 200 MT CIGARETTES  
MONTH TO BE INCREASED TO 300 MT MONTH. VAGUE MENTIONS WERE  
MADE OF SYRIA EXPORTING CIGARETTES AT SOME POINT IN FUTURE  
AND EVEN GROWING OWN STOCKS OF FLUE CURED AND BURLEY TOBACCO.

D. WHEAT: POPE TOLD BY OFFICIAL OF MIN ECC & TRADE THAT CANADA WHEAT SOLD AT FIVE YEAR, 8 PERCENT INTEREST TERMS. AGATT HAS HOWEVER PICKED UP SOMEWHAT CONFLICTING INFO AND WILL CHECK OUT FURTHER.

E. FY 1978 TITLE I: IN VIEW OF RELATIVELY SMALL PROGRAM LEVEL AND UNCERTAINTIES OF GOS IMPORT SCHEDULES AND NEEDS, WOULD SUGGEST THAT ISC FOLLOW PERU PRECEDENT AND AUTHORIZE NEGOTIATIONS OF FIRM DOLLAR PROGRAM AND APPROXIMATE COMMODITY LEVELS WITH ACTUAL COMMODITY LEVELS TO BE WORKED OUT DURING NEGOTIATIONS. APPEARS THAT MOST FEASIBLE COMMODITY LEVELS WOULD BE 20,000 MT FLOUR AND 20,000 MT RICE.

F. CCC CREDIT: AGATT WILL REVIEW STATUS OF PROGRAM AND REPORT SEPTEL.

G. OCEAN TRANSPORTATION: DURING MEETING WITH SYRIMAR ON 2/9/78, THERE WAS BRIEF DISCUSSION OF SHIPPING AGENTS. FYI APPARENTLY SYRINAR HAS HAD DISPUTE WITH FY 1977 AGENT AND IS IN MARKET FOR NEW SHIPPING AGENT. USDA/OTD MAY BE REQUESTED TO OFFER PROPOSAL ON ACTING AS SHIPPING AGENT. OGS M/CCC SHOULD BEGIN INTERNAL DISCUSSIONS ON POSITION IF SYRIA OR ANY OTHER TITLE I COUNTRY MAKES REQUEST THAT CCC ACT AS SHIPPING AGENT END FYI. POPE WAS UNABLE VISIT PORT FACILITIES AND CAN ONLY REPORT SYRIMAR ADVICE THAT CONDITIONS ARE "IMPROVED".

2. JORDAN 2-10/12:

A) WHEAT. ALTHOUGH FIRM ESTIMATES FOR 1978 CROP CANNOT UNCLASSIFIED

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BE MADE AT THIS TIME APPEARS THAT JORDAN WHEAT CROP WILL BE GREATLY IMPROVED OVER PAST TWO YEAR LEVEL. AGATT ESTIMATES 1978 CROP AT 140,000 MT. MINISTER OF SUPPLY INDICATED THAT ADDITIONAL IMPORTS OF 25-35,000 MT WOULD BE NEEDED FOR JUNE/JULY PERIOD. EMBASSY IS REVIEWING STATISTICS RE UMR STATUS.

B) FEEDGRAINS: THERE APPEARS TO BE MARKET DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL IN JORDAN FOR FEEDGRAINS FOR POULTRY FEEDING. FYI APPARENTLY MIN/AG AND MIN OF SUPPLY DIFFER ON WHAT ROLE IF ANY, GOJ SHOULD PLAY IN IMPORTS OF FEEDGRAINS AND PROBABLY NOTHING WILL HAPPEN UNTIL INTERNAL GOJ PROBLEMS RESOLVED END FYI.

C) PORT & STORAGE: GOJ HAS EMBARKED ON AMBITIOUS STORAGE AND PORT PROJECTS. AT PORT AGABA A 500 MT PER HOUR DISCHARGE WITH 50,000 MT STORAGE PROJECT UNDER CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATED FOR COMPLETION IN JULY 1979. WHILE FIRM FIGURES DIFFICULT TO PIN DOWN, APPEARS THAT STORAGE CAPACITY, EXCLUDING PORT, WILL BE APPROXIMATELY 200,000 MT WHEN CURRENT CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS COMPLETED.

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00  
OMB-01 AID-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 /047 W  
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D) DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES: LEARNED THAT MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE HAS POLICY TO SHIFT LAND FROM WHEAT (FIELD CROPS) TO OLIVES, VEGETABLES, AND OTHER "TRUCK CROPS". THIS IS BECAUSE OF MIN AG CONVICTION THAT HIGH PRODUCTION COST OF FIELD CROPS NOT JUSTIFIED IN VIEW OF IMPORT PRICES AND EXPORT MARKET POTENTIAL FOR SUBSTITUTES. WFP PROJECT IS BEING SIGNED TO SHIFT SOME 35,000 ACRES FROM FIELD CROPS TO OTHER CROPS. PROJECT COST WILL BE 36 MILLION DOLLARS.

3. ISRAEL. 2/13-17: A) TITLE I: VISIT TO HAIFA PORT CONFIRMS THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO PROBLEMS IN DISCHARGING AND PORT CLEARANCE OF TITLE I, OR ANY, GRAIN COMMODITIES. ELEVATOR DISCHARGES 33,000 MT VESSEL IN THREE DAYS. NEW DISCHARGE "DEVIDE" OPERATES AT 600 MT PER HOUR. FURTHER PORT INFO AIRPOUCHED.

B) TITLE II: ISRAEL PORT AUTHORITY STATES THAT BAGGED COMMODITIES NOT IN CONTAINERS, ON PALLETS, OR PRESUNG WILL BE GIVEN LOWEST DISCHARGE PRIORITY. REFER TO FFP OFFICER LETTER TO SHEEHAN DATED JAN 13 AND APODACA REPLY DATED FEB. 1. THESE TITLE I COMMODITIES  
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ARE SHIPPED THOROUGH ISRAEL PORTS FOR WEST BANK AND GAZA FOR VARIOUS VOLAG DISTRIBUTORS. PROBLEM APPLIES TO ALL ISRAEL PORTS. BECAUSE OF INTERNAL TRANSPORTATION PROBLEM AND SECURITY REGULATIONS, COMMODITIES SHOULD EITHER BE PRESUNG OR ON PALLETS AND NOT SHIPPED

IN CONTAINERS.

4. POPE NOW SCHEDULED ARRIVE CAIRO 2/19.  
CRAWFORD

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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